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LETTER DATED 12 SEPTEMBER 1999 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have been instructed by my Government to inform you of the attack by ethnic Albanians on the northern part of Kosovska Mitrovica on 9 September 1999. This has been the most brazen and violent attack on the Serbian population of Kosovo and Metohija, the autonomous province of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia, since the deployment of KFOR two months ago and seems to have been committed with the prior knowledge of the United Nations security presence. On that day, at about 5 p.m., all telephone lines in Kosovska Mitrovica and the contiguous Serb-populated town of Zvecan were disconnected and at 8 p.m. KFOR blocked the Kosovska Mitrovica-Zvecan road in order to prevent the Zvecan Serbs from helping their fellow Serbs repel the attack.

The attack was sparked by the ethnic Albanians that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has been resettling in the northern part of Kosovska Mitrovica in the last few weeks. They began throwing stones and opened fire at Serbs gathered at the Brdo part of the town to forestall an attempt by ethnic Albanians from the southern Albanian-populated part to cross the Ibar river bridge into the Serbian part of the town. As a French gendarmerie cordon held off the defending Serbs and the Italian carabinieri sought to disperse the advancing Albanians with tear gas, several grenades and stun grenades were hurled and at about 7 p.m. mortar shells fell on Brdo and the bridge from the southern part of the town. Thirty-three Serbs were injured in the assault.

The latest events are further proof of the very volatile security situation in Kosovo and Metohija and the systematic pressure that is being brought on Serbs to force them to leave the localities in which they live as a compact community and cleanse the Serbian province of Serbs and other non-Albanians altogether. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has warned the Security Council and the United Nations presences of the policy and practice of ethnic Albanian secessionists on many occasions and demanded that they be prevented. The United Nations presences are duty-bound to establish a secure environment for all residents of Kosovo and Metohija under Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and their failure to do so thus far is evinced by a growing number of Serbian and other non-Albanian victims of Albanian terrorist separatism, as well as the expulsion of Serbs and non-Albanians from this Serbian province.

To carry out its duty and fulfil its mandate, the United Nations presences must strictly implement Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), in particular the provisions relating to the disarmament of the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) within the envisaged period of time. Short of this, there will be no end to violence in Kosovo and Metohija and no improvement of the security situation. The United Nations presences should also take energetic measures to apprehend and punish the organizers of violent demonstrations and continuous provocations from the southern, Albanian-populated part of Kosovska Mitrovica, aided and abetted by KLA. UNMIK would also be well-advised to cancel its decision on sending 2,000 Albanian children to schools in the northern part of Kosovska Mitrovica since its implementation in the current ethnically charged and tense situation in that town would further exacerbate that situation and would bring added pressure to bear upon the threatened local Serbs to leave the town.

In recalling that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has fulfilled all its obligations under Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) on schedule, I take the liberty to point out that my Government expects UNMIK and KFOR to carry out their obligations as well.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIĆ
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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